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Conceptualization of internationalization in the Albanian context/ How to define Internationalization

Elton Skendaj – HERE Albania
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Legal Framework



- “On Higher Education in the Republic of Albania 80/2015” Chapter I, Article 1, paragraph e):
- Higher Education is a public responsibility and service whose mission is to support international cooperation in the field of higher education.



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- Oxford Dictionary: *the act or process of bringing something under the control or protection of two or more nations; the act or process of making something international*
- Present day Albanian language dictionary: “It is related or has to do with relations among countries and peoples throughout the world, international relations, international arena, international cooperation”



It already existed long before.....

- Confucius Schools in China (6th century BC)
- Platonic Academy of Athens (5th century BC)
- Library of Alexandria (4th century BC)
- Nalanda in India (5th century AD) and Renaissance in Italy (14th century AD) were intellectual hubs drawing mobile scholars and curious from afar



But more emphasis

- international dimension and the position of higher education in the global arena are given greater emphasis in international, national, and institutional documents and mission statements than ever before (De Wit 2013)





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It keeps intensifying

- “Universities have always been affected by international trends and to a certain degree operated within a broader international community of academic institutions, scholars and research.
- Yet, 21st century realities have magnified the importance of the global context. The rise of English as the dominant language of scientific communication is unprecedented since Latin dominated the academy in medieval Europe.
- Information and communication technologies have created universal means of instantaneous contact and simplified scientific communication”. (Altbach et.al 2009)



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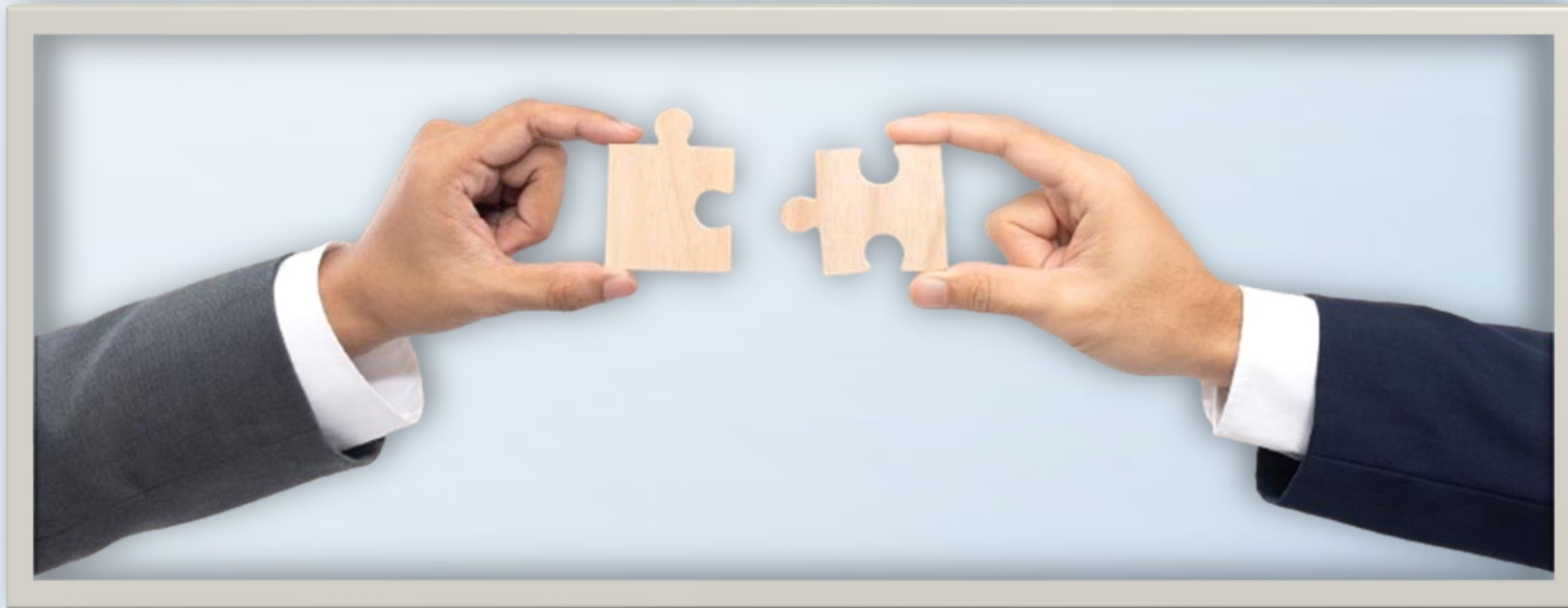


But what if we don't have a universal definition

- it is not necessarily the intention to develop a universal definition, it is imperative that it be appropriate for use in a broad range of contexts and for comparative purposes across countries and regions of the world.
- According to her, what is critical is that the international dimension relates to all aspects of education and the role that it plays in society

Most globally recognized definition

- “the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education” (Knight 2004)





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Why, what it means?

- “1. *Process*; the term process is deliberately used to convey that internationalization is an ongoing and continuing effort;
- 2. *International, intercultural, and global dimension*; these terms are intentionally used as a triad, as together they reflect the breadth of internationalization;
- 3. *Integrating*; the concept of integration is specifically used to denote the process of infusing or embedding the international and intercultural dimension into policies and programs to ensure that the international dimension remains central, not marginal, and is sustainable;

- 4. *Purpose, function, and delivery*; these three concepts have been carefully chosen and are meant to be used together;



- 5. *Delivery* is a narrower concept. It refers to the offering of education courses and programs either domestically or in other countries.



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Because....

- A more international a higher education institution, its graduates will normally have cross-cultural skills, new competencies, and a more global view of any perspective.
- Being in complete isolation or with very little exposure to the international, intercultural and global dimensions, it is obvious that they would serve to a narrow audience with very local impact to the society while its graduates will struggle in the future to adopt to new global developments and requirements for cross-cultural competencies in the job market



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What about this one?

- “Comprehensive internationalization is a commitment, confirmed through action, to infuse international and comparative perspectives throughout the teaching, research, and service missions of higher education.
- It shapes institutional ethos and values and touches the entire higher education enterprise. It is essential that it be embraced by institutional leadership, governance, faculty, students, and all academic service and support units.
- It is an institutional imperative, not just a desirable possibility.
(Hudzik 2011)

One or the other....

- Knight saw the internationalization as an ongoing process whereas Hudzik, right from the start of his definition, prefers to use the word commitment. The process of internationalization of higher education institutions not necessarily has to go through the same patterns in all of them. Had it been the same in all institutions, then it signals that there is something not right out there.
- Even among higher education institutions, similar in size and fields of research, located in the same country under the same legislative framework, the internationalization approach is different
-
- “...the global reconfiguration of economies, systems of trade, research, and communication, and the impact of global forces on local life, dramatically expand the need for comprehensive internationalization and the motivations and purposes driving it”,

There's more to it?

- “internationalization at home” is another definition and process of internationalization in higher education institutions. It is also supported by the European Commission which in turn is financially supporting capacity building projects across countries in the European Education Area.



IHE at Home

- Firmly stated in the *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions* back in July 2013.
- Initially the term was first mentioned and coined by Paul Crowther (Crowther et al. 2001) and was quite simple: “Any internationally related activity with the exception of outbound student and staff mobility.”

At home is better, who says so?

- **internationalization at home implies adding that international dimension in all aspects of academic and research aspects without having the need for physical mobility.**
- **This implies first of all that higher education institutions had to update the curricula in the sense of internationalization providing them in foreign language to attract foreign students and teachers but also introduce new authors.**



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- “Internationalization at Home is the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments.”
- This definition was also referred to by the Erasmus+ Guide 2023. (Beelen & Jones 2015)

European Strategy

- Council of European Union (April 6 2022) conclusions on a European strategy empowering higher education institutions for the future of Europe,
- “Transnational cooperation between European HEIs adds to their attractiveness to international students, researchers and global partners and increases the quality of educational offers and research and innovation potential.

Again More IHE

- ‘European Universities’ and the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) in developing joint internationalization activities and strategies across higher education, research and innovation.
- This would help them to project themselves internationally, build networks with key partners around the world, strengthen the capacities of partners in third countries and bolster the international (inward and outward) mobility of students, researchers, academics and staff.

